



## Disasters and their consequences for public health

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### Abstract:

Humanitarian emergencies, including natural and human-made disasters, conflicts and complex emergencies, constitute what has traditionally been considered the main threat to health security worldwide. Each year millions of people are affected by natural and man-made disasters around the world. Tornados, hurricanes, heavy rains and earthquakes resulted in tens of thousands of deaths and many more affected. Indeed, disasters would not be disastrous if it were not for their effect on the human population. Links between the natural environment and human health have been suggested for centuries. Disasters throughout history have had significant impact on the numbers, health status and life style of populations. It induce: Deaths, Severe injuries, requiring extensive treatments, Increased risk of communicable diseases, Damage to the health facilities, Damage to the water systems, Food shortage, Population movements. The authors focused on the natural disasters, caused by natural forces rather than by acts associated with human behavior and that affect a large population in a widespread geographic region. Describing the general effects of disasters on health, it does not pretend to cover every contingency. Review of recent literature on humanitarian emergencies has shown that the public health consequences of natural disasters are complex. Disasters directly impact the health of the population resulting in physical trauma, acute disease and emotional trauma. In addition, disasters may increase the morbidity and mortality associated with chronic disease and infectious disease through the impact on the health care system.

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### Resource Description

#### Exposure :

weather or climate related pathway by which climate change affects health

Extreme Weather Event, Food/Water Security, Food/Water Security, Human Conflict/Displacement, Precipitation

**Extreme Weather Event:** Drought, Flooding, Hurricanes/Cyclones

**Food/Water Security:** Food Access/Distribution

#### Geographic Feature:

resource focuses on specific type of geography

None or Unspecified



# Climate Change and Human Health Literature Portal

## **Geographic Location:**

resource focuses on specific location

Global or Unspecified

## **Health Impact:**

specification of health effect or disease related to climate change exposure

Infectious Disease, Injury, Mental Health/Stress

**Infectious Disease:** General Infectious Disease

**Mental Health Effect/Stress:** Mood Disorder, Schizophrenia/Delusional Disorder, Stress Disorder

## **Mitigation/Adaptation:**

mitigation or adaptation strategy is a focus of resource

Adaptation

**Population of Concern:** A focus of content

## **Population of Concern:**

populations at particular risk or vulnerability to climate change impacts

Children, Elderly, Low Socioeconomic Status

**Other Vulnerable Population:** People with limited or no English proficiency; People who are geographically or culturally isolated; People with addictions

## **Resource Type:**

format or standard characteristic of resource

Review

## **Timescale:**

time period studied

Time Scale Unspecified